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ASIAN ART MUSEUM OF SAN FRANCISCO

MISSION STATEMENT

DRAFT

To fulfill Avery Brundage's vision by developing the finest museum in the Western World devoted to Asian Art, thereby establishing a bridge to international understanding of the arts and culture of Asia.

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COLLECTION MANAGEMENT POLICY

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the collections management policy of the Asian Art Museum is to clarify the means by which the museum seeks to fulfil its mission.

The collections management policy will be complemented by a procedures manual. This manual will lay out in detail the ways in which the collections management policy is to be applied.

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Means

The museum seeks to fulfill this purpose by the following means:

i. Scholarly research.

ii. Preservation and expansion of the collections.

iii. Interpretation and publication of the collections.

iv. Presentation of its own and other collections of Asian art in exhibitions open to the general public in San Francisco and at other national and international venues.

v. Presentation of educational programs such as films, classes, lectures, theatrical productions, musical and dance performances which complement and enhance public understanding of the museum's collections.

vi. Maintenance of accurate and comprehensive records as defined in the AAMSF procedures manual regarding the provenance, exhibition history, transfers of title, import and export, publication history, and curatorial research of objects in the collections which may be made available to members of the public upon demand.

3. Scope of the Collections

In order to promote the widest possible understanding of Asian art and culture, the museum collects:

Sculpture, textiles, paintings, calligraphy, decorative arts,...(to be completed/edited/rewritten by the curators)

The museum recognizes that while the establishment of priorities is necessary, the availability of significant art objects is limited and unpredictable. Therefore the museum must be prepared to act promptly and not necessarily in conformity with established priorities and procedures when unanticipated acquisition opportunities arise.

4. **Selection Criteria**

Objects may be accepted for acquisition into either the permanent collection, the study collection or the teaching collection.

The Permanent Collection

i. For acceptance into the permanent collections, an object must:

a. have art historical significance, be in good physical condition relative to its age, and meet very high aesthetic standards

b. be relevant to the collections and consistent with the museum's goals

c. fill a specific need within a collection OR open a new collection area consistent with the museum's purpose

d. be of a size and condition such that the museum can reasonably expect to fulfill its obligation to properly store, preserve, conserve, catalog and protect the object

e. be found to comply with the museum's policies regarding the acquisition of cultural property.

f. be of such type and significance that the museum may be reasonably sure of using the object in one or more of its programs as defined in the AAMSF procedures manual.

The museum will not acquire any object for the permanent collection until a reasonable effort has been made to ascertain its individual history.

The Study Collection

ii. For acceptance into the study collection, an object must be useful for study purposes as defined in the AAMSF procedures manual. It need not be in good enough physical condition to be considered exhibitable.

The Teaching Collection

iii. The teaching collection comprises objects whose sole purpose in the context of the Asian Art Museum is to promote education about the collections by means of hands-on workshops, classes etc. These objects shall not be kept in art storage and shall be the responsibility of the education department.

GIFTS AND BEQUESTS

The museum's acceptance of a donated object does not require the museum to accession the object into the permanent collection.

Gifts for Future Sale:

In some cases objects may be accepted for the express purpose of future sale. Such objects will not be accessioned into the collections, but will be forwarded to the appropriate appraiser/dealer/auction house? for sale at public auction.

All proceeds from the sale of objects donated for that purpose shall be used exclusively for art acquisitions.

Fractional Interest Gifts:

The museum may, under special circumstances, and with great care, accept a gift of a fractional interest in an object or collection. This may be done only if the initial instrument of conveyance clearly defines the terms of the gift and includes a commitment to give the remaining interest in the gift to the museum on or before the death of the donor.

Restricted Gifts:

Except in extraordinary circumstances, the Museum shall make every effort to obtain gifts and bequests without restrictions regarding their use or future disposition.

If an object is accepted subject to a restriction, the parties shall attempt to agree on a reasonable time limit during which the limitation shall apply, for example, 25 years or the life of the donor.

Compliance with the UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export, and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, August 11, 1972

The museum will not acquire works of art when it is substantially certain that recovery of such works involved the unscientific excavation or intentional destruction of sites or monuments after August 11th, 1972.

The museum must have reasonable assurance that any object considered for acquisition which may be of cultural importance to the country of origin was not exported after August 11th, 1972.

The museum will follow the guidelines laid down in the AAMSF Procedures manual in determining whether a potential acquisition meets the criteria outlined above.

The museum shall inform all potential dealers and donors of its policies and procedures regarding provenance.

Disposition of objects acquired in a manner inconsistent with the UNESCO Convention:

If the museum should come into possession of an object which was exported in violation of the principles relating to cultural property as expressed in the UNESCO Convention, the museum will, if legally free to do so, seek to return the object to the donor or vendor.

THE A & L COMMITTEE

The Chair of the Commission shall establish a committee, the Acquisitions and Loans Committee, consisting of at least seven members, a majority of whom shall be members of the Asian Art Commission.

This committee shall receive and act upon the recommendations of the curatorial staff in order to oversee all aspects of collections management in keeping with the stated purpose, policies and procedures of the museum as defined in the Collections Management Policy and the Procedures Manual of the museum.

The A&L Committee shall meet at least quarterly at a predetermined day and hour.

Objects to be considered for acquisition shall be made available for examination by members of the A&L Committee prior to the A&L Committee meeting.

At a minimum a majority of the members of the A&L committee shall review and recommend to the Commission any object proposed for acquisition.

The Commission shall promote, establish, and assist in the development of an acquisition fund to be expended for the acquisition of Asian Art.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No commissioner or employee may engage in the business of dealing in art of a type collected by the museum. No member of the A & L Committee shall be a dealer.

No commissioner, employee, or volunteer may participate in the museum's decision to accept a donation of art from that individual or to exhibit a work of art owned by him or her.

No commissioner, employee, or volunteer shall purchase any work of art from the museum except at public auction.

No Commissioner, employee or volunteer shall use his or her affiliation with the Asian Art Museum to promote his or her personal collecting activities.

An employee who acquires by purchase or exchange a work of art of a type collected by the museum, valued at $1,000 or more, shall promptly give written notice of the purchase to the Director and the chair of the A&L Committee or to the Chair of the Commission. A volunteer who functions as a staff member shall also give prompt notice of any such purchase.

An object subject to the provisions of the preceding paragraph shall be made available to the staff and the A&L Committee upon request.

If it is impractical to submit an object for A&L and staff inspection, the Museum may require the buyer to submit photographs of the object together with the appropriate background information.

If, within 90 days following the written notice described above, the Museum determines that it wishes to acquire the object for the permanent collection, the employee or volunteer who acquired it

must agree to sell it to the Museum for the price paid by the individual plus the reasonable costs of acquisition.

These provisions concerning personal collecting shall apply to the spouses and minor children of Commissioners, employees, and volunteers.

DEACCESSION POLICY

The museum may deaccession only those objects upon which there are no enforceable donor-imposed restrictions.

If, however, the museum finds that adherence to legal restrictions is impossible or detrimental to the museum, legal counsel may be asked to evaluate the possibility of removing the restrictions.

Generally, as a matter of courtesy, the museum should consult the donor, near relatives, or locatable heirs prior to deaccessioning an object.

The original donor shall receive credit on exhibit labels, in publications, and in the museum's records for objects purchased with the proceeds from the sale of the deaccessioned object.

If another public institution wishes to acquire an object to be deaccessioned form the museum's collections, the museum shall consider making the work available to such an institution.

The staff and the A&L Committee shall also give consideration to the transfer, gift, or exchange of objects which have significant cultural, social, historical, or scientific value to another public institution.

Objects may be considered for deaccessioning for the following reasons:

Relevance - if the object does not fall within the scope of the collections, or is not consistent with the purposes, priorities, and areas of interest of the Asian Art Museum

Redundancy - If the object is comparable but inferior to another object within the collections

Physical Integrity - If the object is in such poor physical condition that proper restoration is not feasible, or would render the object essentially false

Authenticity - If the object is found not to be authentic and has little value for research or educational purposes

Destructive Analysis - If the object is needed for destructive analysis where the museum has determined that the potential result outweighs the value of the object to the collections

Fragments - If the object is found to be a portion of a whole of which other parts belong to another institution.

Legality - If the object is determined to have been acquired in a manner contrary to the museum's acquisitions policy, or if the object is determined to have been illegally exported from its country of origin or place of repose

Outside Appraisals

For objects estimated to have a fair market value over $ 2,000, the curator in charge shall obtain written opinions from two disinterested outside experts.

Criteria for these appraisals shall be in accordance with the standards outlined in the AAMSF procedures manual.

If the A&L Committee votes to propose the deaccession of the object, the opinions of these two disinterested outside experts shall be recorded in the minutes of the A&L Committee meeting.

Deaccession Procedures

All deaccessioned objects shall be processed according to the Deaccession Procedures outlined in the AAMSF Procedures Manual.

An object may be deaccessioned only if the deaccessioning is recommended by the Director, the Chief Curator, the Curator in charge of the pertinent department, two-thirds of the members of the A&L Committee, and two-thirds of a quorum of the Commission.

COMPLIANCE WITH IRS REGULATIONS

If an object is deaccessioned, the Museum shall comply with applicable IRS regulations which may require reporting the disposition of the object. The Registrar shall send to the Donor or his or her representative a copy of any form submitted to the IRS.

DISPOSAL OF DEACCESSIONED OBJECTS

An object may be disposed of by one of the following means upon recommendation of the Commission:

(1) return to vendor;

(2) by public auction;

(3) by some other means, if the A & L Committee and the Commission determine, on the basis of written information supplied by the Chief Curator and the Curator-in-charge of the object, that:

a. it is advantageous to the Museum to dispose of the object by some other method; and

b. the amount yielded by that method would be no lower than the amount which would be realized through public auction.

The Director of Purchasing of the City and County of San Francisco must approve the means by which the Museum disposes of the deaccessioned object.

PROCEEDS FROM THE SALE OF DEACCESSIONED OBJECTS

Pursuant to San Francisco Administrative Code Section 28.5, the Museum shall use proceeds from the sale of works of art donated or bequeathed to it for the acquisition of other works of art.

NECESSARY RECORDS OF DEACCESSIONED OBJECTS

In order that the disposal of objects does not inhibit the advancement of scholarly knowledge, the Registrar will retain a full file on the object, which he or she will make available to scholars upon request.

A copy of all catalog and exhibition information, conservation analyses, and study reports shall accompany any object exchanged, sold, or transferred to a public institution, provided that confidentiality is not required.

LOANS

All requests for the loan of objects belonging to the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco shall be subject to the approval of the A&L Committee upon the recommendation of the Director, the Chief Curator, the Curator in charge of the pertinent department, and the Conservator.

A written loan agreement made prior to the receipt or shipment shall govern all incoming and outgoing loans.

The Registration department shall maintain complete records of all loans as defined in the AAMSF Procedures manual.

INSURANCE

In the absence of any specific lender-imposed requirements, or a release signed by the owner, the museum will insure incoming loans under the terms of its fine arts policy.

As of January 1st, 1992, the museum does not insure loaned objects against damages occurring as a result of seismic activity.

In certain circumstances the museum may elect to maintain insurance for objects from the Asian's collections while they are on loan to another institution. In such cases the museum will charge the borrowing institution at the rate of 1% of the value of the object per month for the duration of the loan.

OUTGOING LOANS

The Asian Art Museum may lend objects from its collections to other institutions and agencies for scholarly, educational, or exhibition purposes, provided that it can be reasonably assured that the object(s) loaned will receive a level of care and security which is acceptable to the Curator, Conservator, Director, and the A&L Committee of the Museum.

Except under very special circumstances, the Museum will not lend objects which the professional staff determines to have extraordinary historical, aesthetic or cultural value or, which are too fragile to travel.

The museum may lend objects from its collections only if:

The Director, the Chief Curator, the Curator in charge of

the object(s) and (where applicable) the Curator of Education recommend the loan.

The Conservator verifies that the object(s) can withstand the hazards inherent in the proposed loan

The Registrar confirms that there are no conditions or restrictions on the use of the object which preclude the loan

The A&L Committee approves the loan, and

The object does not appear on the list of objects designated as restricted from travel or loan as defined in the AAMSF procedures manual.

The A&L Committee must approve all loans by a majority vote.

An administrative charge of $50.00 per object will be levied for all outgoing objects, unless specifically waived by the Director or the Chief curator.

Eligible Borrowers

The museum may lend to any other museum which meets the professional standards outlined in the AAMSF Procedures manual.

The museum may make loans to corporations for educational exhibition purposes only, and only to those corporations where the art handling and environmental conditions are known to be in compliance with professional museum standards.

With the approval of the Commission, the museum may lend an object for display in the offices of a high-ranking government official.

Any such loans will be subject to the conditions outlined in the AAMSF Procedures manual.

The museum may not lend any objects to private individuals.

INCOMING LOANS

Objects will be borrowed only if they are needed to fulfill the basic purposes of the museum.

All incoming loans are subject to the approval of the Director. The

Director shall provide the A&L Committee with a list of all incoming loans which are for a term in excess of six months.

The A&L Committee must approve by majority vote all incoming loans which are for exhibition, extended periods of time, or unusual purposes, or are subject to other than the standard loan conditions as defined in the AAMSF Procedures manual.

The museum will not provide lenders with long-term storage or insurance free of charge. Such services will be provided, however, for the periodic loan of objects considered for acquisition, research, or exhibition, for partial or fractional gifts on loan to the museum, and in exceptional circumstances acceptable to the commission.

Before any incoming loan is accepted, the following factors must be considered:

i. the availability of storage or exhibition space;

ii. the condition of the object and its ability to withstand travel;

iii. the costs of transportation, insurance, and restoration, if necessary;

iv. the lender's restrictions;

v. any problems of provenance or copyright.

LOANS BY SPECIAL AGREEMENT

Loans by special agreement are those incoming loans made to the Asian Art Museum by individuals, other institutions, or support organizations under special loan agreements whose terms deviate from those in the standard agreement.

The A&L Committee, the Commission, and the individual or board(s) of governors of the institution concerned must approve such agreements.

All special agreements shall be made in consideration of the following facts:

i. the intrinsic value of the collection or objects;

ii. the physical needs of the collection or object(s);

iii. the financial burden imposed upon the museum by the loan;

iv. the staff available for the care and interpretation of the loan;

v. the administration of the loan;

vi. any restrictions imposed by the lender;

vii. the impact of the loaned material upon the other collections within the museum.

When borrowing for exhibition purposes, the museum will accept only those objects which meet the following criteria:

i. the objects are described on an agreed upon exhibition checklist;

ii. the objects are of a quality commensurate with the exhibition standards of the museum;

iii. the curator and the lender agree upon the information to be presented on display labels and in exhibition catalogs;

iv. the museum can be reasonably assured that the lender holds valid title to the object(s).

RETURN OF LOANED OBJECTS

Generally, the museum will return loaned objects only to the original lender upon his or her surrender of the original lender's copy of the loan receipt.

CALIFORNIA CIVIL CODE, SECTION 1899

It is the responsibility of the owner of property on loan to the museum to notify the museum promptly in writing of any change of address or change in ownership of the property. Failure to notify the museum of these changes may result in the owner's loss of rights in the property.

In keeping with California Civil Code, section 1899, the museum will make the requisite effort to return loaned property to the lender or his or her successor in interest.

Unless the loaned property is returned to the lender or his or her successor in interest, the museum shall retain for a period of not less than 25 years the original or an accurate copy of each notice of change in address or in ownership of the property filed pursuant to California Civil Code, section 1899.

ACCESS TO THE COLLECTIONS

In keeping with its mission statement, the museum will fulfill its responsibility to educate the public by providing reasonable access to the collections.

Such access will be provided in a manner consistent with professional museum practices, which will enable the museum to meet its outreach obligations to the people of the City and County of San Francisco without endangering the safety of its collections.

The museum shall comply with all government regulations concerning access for the disabled to its programs and collections.

The hours the museum is open to the public shall be set by the Commission in consultation with the Fine Arts Museums.

The Director, in consultation with the curatorial staff, shall regulate access to those objects which are exceptionally fragile.

The Director may grant exceptions to the access policies.

Access to the collections will be carried out in accordance with the procedures laid down in the AAMSF Procedures manual.

Date:_____ Date:_____

_____ _____

Rand Castile, Director